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# BULLETIN

OF THE

## AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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### CONTENTS

PUBLICITY FOR LIBRARIES  
CHICAGO MIDWINTER MEETINGS  
LIBRARY BULLETINS

SHAKESPEARE TERCENTENARY  
REGISTRATION OF BIBLIOGRAPHIES  
LIBRARY TRAINING IN NORMAL  
SCHOOLS

### PUBLICITY FOR LIBRARIES

#### **Report of the Chairman of the A. L. A. Committee on Publicity to the Executive Board**

Following is the report of the Publicity Committee appointed by the Executive Board in January, 1915:

The duty of the committee was understood to be to obtain all possible newspaper and magazine publicity for the Berkeley conference and its addresses.

##### **1. Preparation and Advance Notices**

**Announcements:** On March 13, a letter asking publication of the conference date and place was sent to the editors of American City, American Historical Review, Dial, Education, Independent, Journal of Education, Nation, National Municipal Review, Review of Reviews, School and Society, Survey. Seven of these used the material.

**Collection of Material:** On March 31, a letter was addressed to each of the sections and affiliated organizations of the A. L. A., asking for advance information as to programs and speakers, and particularly asking, "For your section, what is the most important thing this committee could place before the general newspaper and magazine public of the country?" The response

to this request was slow and generally meagre; the committee feels that the obtaining of material sufficiently in advance is one of the problems in this work.

Meanwhile, through the energetic work of Mr. Utley, copies of several papers of the general program were in our hands, together with several photographs, so that nine days before the opening of the conference we were able to send several important addresses and photographs to the Associated Press at Kansas City and the Exposition Press Bureau at San Francisco, both of which had offered to coöperate.

**Special Articles in Magazines:** On May 17, letters were addressed to the editors of American City, Chicago Tribune, Christian Science Monitor, Dial, Independent, Journal of Education, Kansas City Star, Nation, School and Society, Survey, offering to furnish special articles prepared by librarians in attendance. Only one editor (Christian Science Monitor) failed to answer. Three (Independent, Journal of Education, Kansas City Star) expressed inability to use such special articles. The other six (American City, Chicago Tribune, Dial, Nation, School and Society, Survey)

invited articles or reports. At the close of the conference, five of these were furnished, three were published (*Dial*, *Nation*, *Survey*), and one (*American City*) resulted in a promise of a special article on the civics room. For these articles the co-operation of Messrs. Bostwick, Bowerman, Rush, Wright, and Wyer is gratefully acknowledged.

## 2. The Work at Berkeley

*Headquarters:* The chairman of the committee arrived in Berkeley on June 1, and immediately arranged publicity headquarters near the general headquarters in the University Library. The cordial and effective assistance of Mr. Leupp, of his secretary, Miss Roberts, and of other members of the library staff, is gratefully acknowledged. Numerous papers, lists of officers, committee reports, and news summaries were copied by the library typists.

*Contract with Ricker News Syndicate:* A visit to the Exposition News Bureau revealed the information that because of curtailment of its funds it would be unable to give us the active assistance promised. Arrangements were therefore made with the Ricker News Syndicate, at San Francisco, to send a special writer each day to coöperate with the committee. We gathered advance material and guided the interpretation as far as possible; the Ricker Syndicate writers furnished telephone and written reports to the Associated Press and the local newspapers, writing new "leads" for each newspaper. In the main this service was accurate and prompt. The cost was fifty dollars.

*Newspaper representatives:* Special representatives of San Francisco, Oakland, and Berkeley newspapers were almost constantly present. Your committee furnished copies of papers, abstracts, lists of officers and committees, reports, photographs; and answered questions. In particular we acknowledge the interested coöperation of Mr. A. B. Schuster, representing the San Francisco Chronicle and Oakland Tribune, and Miss Andrews, of the Berkeley Gazette.

*Associated Press:* Reports were made to the Associated Press, San Francisco office,

twice daily by telephone and once in writing. We were fortunate in having to deal with a well-informed and interested man, Mr. John Evans, in charge of the "A. P." news gathering.

*Other service:* In response to telegraphic request, copies of all papers, reports, lists of officers elected, etc., in our possession, were mailed from day to day to Mr. E. L. Pearson, special writer for the *Boston Transcript*. Copies of papers, etc., were furnished the editors of *Library Journal* and *Public Libraries*, on request, with the understanding that the consent of the writers would be obtained before publication.

*Acknowledgments:* Thanks are due the following persons for special assistance in collecting material during the conference: Mr. Chas. E. Rush, Mr. Joseph L. Wheeler, Miss Sula Wagner, Miss Julia Robinson, and Miss Effie Power.

## 3. Results

*Local papers:* In the papers of the three bay cities (San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley), from May 31 to June 10, the amount of space devoted to report of the conference was a little more than thirty-six (36) columns. In the main this material was accurate and comprehensive. There was but one article that might be called "sensational."

*Associated Press:* Mr. Evans, of the Associated Press at San Francisco, stated to your committee that he had "put on the wire" an average of six hundred (600) words per day of our material, and he displayed the copy as evidence. One of the editors of the Omaha World-Herald said to the committee, "You got lots of stuff over the wire—more than we could use." However, the amount of material published in the newspapers of the country was disappointing. So far as known, a total of 20 articles appeared.

*Magazines:* We have already referred to the three special reports published by the *Dial*, *Nation*, and *Survey*. Correspondence is still being conducted with the American Association for International Conciliation, regarding the use of Mr. Bowerman's paper.

#### 4. Cost

The total cost for the work in connection with the Berkeley conference was \$197.85.

#### 5. Suggestions for the Future

1. Organize the work so that we shall do it all ourselves except stenographic help.

2. Divide the work, at conference time, under the direction of chairman of the committee, into at least three parts, with a man in charge of each:

a) Special articles and summarizing reports, such as this year's reports in the Dial, Nation, and Survey. Summarizing articles to be sent to the home papers of conference members, with local "leads."

b) Advance abstracts to be insisted upon and to be sent, with local "leads" to the states interested in a given speaker or topic. For example, when Miss Downey speaks on extension work in Utah, send abstracts to Utah papers in advance, with release on the day of her appearance on program.

c) The same preparation and material for local newspapers and Associated Press, as this year at Berkeley.

3. The committee to be active throughout the year for which it is appointed (preferably from about September to September). Two lines of work might be conducted:

a) Preparation and distribution to newspapers and magazines of a news bulletin, similar to those sent out by the American Civic Association and the University of Minnesota. A sheet of the Minnesota size can be printed for \$9 per 500 copies, and second class mailing privileges could be obtained. From four to six issues per year would serve.

b) Collection and placing of special "library" articles in periodicals. The committee might serve as a year-round clearing house for papers and addresses and ideas from the various state and sectional meetings and from individuals.

#### 6. Publicity Through Advertising and Printed Matter

The foregoing takes no account of the valuable possibilities in coöperative publi-

cation of posters, lists, envelope enclosures, street car advertisement cards, and other printed matter. Neither does it consider the interesting possibilities of an advisory publicity bureau for American libraries. It is suggested by the present committee that the proposal of the Pacific Northwest Library Association might be tried out by the A. L. A. Publicity Committee, assigning this work to a special member of the committee. The present committee believes that a permanent publicity officer of the American Library Association, working along the lines suggested above, would more than earn his salary almost from the first, in enlarged incomes for local libraries, in increased membership in the A. L. A., and in the savings accruing from coöoperative printing.

Respectfully submitted,

WILLIS H. KERR,  
Chairman, Publicity Committee,  
American Library Association.

#### CHICAGO MIDWINTER MEETINGS

The Midwinter library meetings will be held as usual this year in Chicago. Dates are December 29 to 31. Headquarters will be at the Hotel La Salle, where last year's meetings were held. The following rates will apply:

**One Person:** Room with detached bath, \$1.50 and up per day; room with private bath, \$2.00 and up per day.

**Two Persons:** Room with detached bath, \$3.00.

**Two Connecting Rooms with Bath:** Two persons, \$4.50 and \$8.00 per day; four persons, \$7.00 and \$12.00 per day.

Reservations should be made directly with the hotel.

The A. L. A. Council will meet on Wednesday morning and Thursday morning, December 29th and 30th. Some of the features will be papers on the "Economics of library architecture," by Dr. C. W. Andrews; "Publicity methods for libraries," by W. H. Kerr; "The place of the library in the university," by Dr. E. C. Richardson; and "The municipal reference library